

SENATE JUDICIARY

EXHIBIT NO. 7

DATE 3/19/09

FILE NO. HB362

FMDH / STAT Ambulance Services – Glasgow, Fort Peck, Lustre, Hinsdale, St. Marie, Nashua
NE MT STAT Air Ambulance Co-operative – Hospitals of Glasgow, Poplar, Wolf Point and Malta

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March 18, 2009

Reference : HB 362

Comments:

Events in our nation and the world continue to focus our attention on the prevalence of disasters, mass casualty situations and public service disruptions, terrorism, earthquakes, hurricanes, floods, war, wildfires, and even volcanoes.

Additionally we continue to face an increasing number of accidents involving hazardous materials.

This has and continues to bring increased attention to our public safety, emergency medical services and public health systems in terms of preparedness in the state of Montana.

I am in support of HB 362 as it sets the stage for disaster response and disaster response teams. It is vital that there is a clear defined limitation of liability during a declared emergency or disaster. It is also vital that we as a state define "Disaster medicine". With passage of HB 362 we are able to work easier with medical contingency planning (meeting the medical requirements of a population affected by a disaster event) and medical triage (the separation of patients based on severity of injury or illness in light of available resources)

The need for a highly organized disaster preparedness infrastructure in the State, and individuals with the expertise and willingness, in good faith, to step forward and help during a disaster is paramount. If at best we could offer liability protection it would be a start in the right direction.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely

Clayton A. Berger

Director of Ambulance Services / Frances Mahon Deaconess Hospital – Glasgow

Director of Northeast Montana STAT AIR Ambulance Co-operative :

1. Frances Mahon Deaconess Hospital – Glasgow
 2. Phillips County Hospital – Malta
 3. Northeast Montana Healthcare Center – Wolf Point & Poplar
- Valley County Sheriff Department / Deputy Coroner (Retired)